

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

*****news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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AGREEMENT PROPOSED FOR GRAYS LAKE REFUGE

A proposal to develop Grays Lake in southeastern Idaho as a National Wildlife Refuge for waterfowl was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.

Udall said an agreement for cooperative use of the Grays Lake area as a refuge and for existing agricultural uses has been approved by the Department and major private landowners in the area.

The agreement is now subject to approval by remaining landowners in the proposed refuge area and by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.

Under terms of the agreement, both waterfowl and the private landowners would benefit. Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife could construct dams, dikes, fences and other structures required for maintaining a refuge. The agreement would run for 99 years.

Secretary Udall said that basic water rights of the Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Indian Affairs would be maintained. He noted that the Bureau of Indian Affairs has concurred in the proposed agreement.

Grays Lake, located in Bonneville and Caribou Counties, contains more than 10,000 acres of water and marshland and is an important production area for Canada geese and other waterfowl.

Commissioner Clarence F. Pautzke of the Fish and Wildlife Service said sportsmen's groups in the Idaho Falls and Pocatello areas have for decades advocated conservation of the waterfowl habitat of Grays Lake.

"Secretary Udall has given this project the push it needed in order to get the legal technicalities worked out," the Commissioner said. "It appears now that Grays Lake will be permitted to keep its important place as a production area for waterfowl."

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